

# CONFERENCE *connection*

Alabama • Georgia • Mississippi  
South Carolina • Tennessee • NW Florida

## SOUTHEAST UCC Conference



May 15, 2017

### From the Conference Office

#### Register Now for Annual Meeting: June 8-10

We're excited for this year's annual meeting taking place again at lovely Piedmont College from **June 8-10, 2017**.

**Registration deadline is Wednesday, May 31, 2017**

[Registration is now open!](#)

We will be offering a number of options for renewal and continuing education for our Authorized Ministers and MIDs around Annual Meeting.



#### Thursday, June 8:

- Retreat for Authorized Clergy
- Healthy Boundaries Training
- Pastoral Issues in Addiction - Retreat for MIDs and PIEs

#### Friday, June 9

- Retreat for MIDs and PIEs continues
- SEC Board Meeting
- 51st Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference

#### Saturday, June 10

- 51st Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference

Learn more about Annual Meeting [on our website](#).

### From the Interim Conference Minister

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### Coming Events

#### Annual Meeting Booklet Deadline

Friday, May 19

#### Commission on Ministry

Saturday, May 20  
10:00 am - 2:00 pm  
Pilgrim UCC  
Chattanooga, TN

#### Ecclesiastical Council for Marsha Brown

Sunday, May 21  
Brookmeade UCC  
Nashville, TN

#### Upper Room Fellowship

Saturday, May 27  
Nashville, TN

#### SECUCC Annual Meeting

Fri-Sat, June 9-10  
Piedmont College

This past week I had the privilege to worship with the United Church of Huntsville, Huntsville, AL. The newly ordained Rev. Edward Colf led worship, preached, and celebrated communion. It was a joyous time in the life of this congregation. Also, I was able to present to Eddie his ordination certificate. Yes, you may be thinking, "Why didn't he receive his certificate when he was ordained?" Well, the answer is that in the confusion that was my beginning my ministry among you, we, in the office, forgot to order it in time. So, we got to have another celebration!



This experience reminds me so much of our life together. We try, we plan, we organize and sometimes it just doesn't work out. The good news in all of this is that God takes our foibles and turns them into beautiful occasions of grace. I was able to enjoy meeting this wonderful congregation, worship with them, and hear stories about the building and stained glass window. For these blessings and others, I will happily be forgetful at times.

Blessings and peace,  
Marie



## Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2017. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers. [Click here to download the entire 2017 prayer list.](#)

Week of May 21

- Circular Congregational UCC; Charleston, SC

Demorest, GA

## OCWM Giving



Our Church's Wider Mission provides for programs, resources, and tools to keep our churches strong, effective, and growing. Our goal for 2017 is \$240,000.

[Donate today!](#)

## Conference Staff

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**Connect with Us!**

- George Bennett
- Matt Friedrich
- James Norris
- Richard Woodward



Week of May 28

- First Congregational Christian UCC; Montgomery AL
- Clara Benson
- Stephanie Crumpton
- Bonnie Frost
- Patricia Shropshire

### Prayer Requests

- Prayers of Thanksgiving for **Victory for the World's** 30th Anniversary. Tickets are still available for a grand gala celebration on Sunday, May 21 at the Georgia Aquarium. [More information available here.](#)
- Prayers of Thanksgiving for **First Congregational Church in Talladega** on their 149th Anniversary.
- Prayers for **Marsha Brown** as she prepares for her ecclesiastical council on May 21. Marsha is the first Southeast Conference PATHWAYS graduate to progress this far in the ordination process.

### Churches in Transition

First Congregational, Savannah; Garden of Grace, Columbia, SC; Holy Trinity Community Church, Nashville; Howard Congregational, Nashville; Oak Grove Congregational Christian, Pine Mountain, GA; Pilgrim Congregational, Chattanooga, TN; United Church, Huntsville, AL

## News from Around the Conference

### Going to General Synod? Let us know!



As you may know, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ will be in Baltimore this year. This event is open to everyone as a visitor. The Sunday afternoon worship service is open to all at no charge.

If you plan on going to Baltimore this year, please let [Heather](#) and [Marie](#) know. This way you can be invited to our meetings and fun stuff and feel a part of our merry band from the Southeast Conference!

### Central Atlantic Conference General Synod Shelter Project

The 2016 State of Homelessness Report indicates that there were over 26,000 people homeless in the geography covered by the Central Atlantic Conference. That is a lot of people to be without shelter during the cold nights of November through March where the temperatures can drop to single digits. In keeping with the



General Synod Service Project on Homelessness, the Injustice Walks, the CAC is inviting you to participate in our "Shelter Project."

We are asking attendees to make or purchase hats, gloves, scarves, and socks. In addition, we will be collecting "Ugly Quilts" (sleeping bags) or blankets including a small pillow with each. These items are to be brought to General Synod where they will be collected and distributed to the homeless throughout the Central Atlantic Conference during the winter months.

Written directions on making the quilts are available from Interim Conference Minister, Rev. Marie Bacchiocchi ([mbacchiocchi@secucc.org](mailto:mbacchiocchi@secucc.org)). If you are unable to bring items with you, we are happy to accept financial donations for the purchase of these items.

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## **Justice grant helps Alabama church open safe space to LGBT teens**

The UCC national office recently highlighted the work that Open Table UCC in Mobile, AL is doing to support LGBT teens. "Open Table, with the help of an LGBT-advocacy organization in the state and a \$10,000 grant from UCC Justice and Witness Ministries, is showing these teens that there is a place where they can be themselves. 'This is a safe space we provide every Saturday for LGBTQ teens in Mobile,' Sims said. 'No exceptions.' The church has been able to provide that space for the last 16 months. [Read the article on the UCC website.](#)



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## **Back Bay Mission: Strengthening Neighborhoods, Seeking Justice, Transforming Lives.**

Back Bay Mission in Biloxi Mississippi has been a lasting source of hope and help for thousands of children, adults and families along the Mississippi Gulf Coast since 1922. As one of the oldest and most highly respected organizations within the United Church of Christ and on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Back Bay Mission continues its journey of providing innovative solutions and compassionate responses to those suffering at the hands of social injustice. Its Mission Trip program provides hands-on service learning experiences for hundreds of volunteers from across the nation. For more information visit [www.thebackbaymission.org](http://www.thebackbaymission.org)

Back Bay Mission's Board of Directors met May 5-6 in Biloxi and elected officers for 2017-18. President, Matt Williams; Vice-President Jasmine Quinerly; Secretary Wil Brown; Treasurer Brent Johnson. Elected to the Class of 2020 are: Jasmine Quinerly (TX); Crystal Allen (OH); Joyce Bathke (MO); Rosa



### **Back Bay Mission Board of Directors and Staff May 2017**

*L-R: Kenny Washington, Director of Client Services; Shawn Sullivan, CFO; Brent Johnson (MS); Mary Ruth (TN); Scott Martin (TX); Liz Nash (TX); Alice Graham, Executive Director; Carol Merriman (WI); John Magee (MO); Wil Brown (TX); Bob Brautigam (IL); Charles Graham (MS). Directors absent from photo: Crystal Allen (OH) photographer; Jasmine Quinerly (TX), Matt Crebbin (CT); Don Longbottom (TX); Matt Williams (MS); Jesse Chambers (MS); Raymos McMillan (MS).*

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### **Kirkwood UCC Opens New Sanctuary**

Congratulations to Kirkwood UCC in Atlanta on the opening of their new sanctuary on May 7, 2017. The grand homecoming weekend and consecration worship will be held on August 12-13. Make plans now to join them for the celebration!



### **Training, Learning and Retreat Opportunities**

#### **Registration Still Open for Center for Progressive Renewal UCC History, Polity and Theology Class Offered Summer, 2017**

Registration will remain open for only another week and a half for the Center for Progressive Renewal summer semester online UCC History, Polity and Theology class beginning on May 31st and ending August 30, 2017. There are a handful of spaces still available in the course. [Students can register online here.](#)

The class has met the polity requirements of most Committees on Ministry in the UCC and the instructional team for the course is led by Tim Downs. The cost of the class is \$629. Any questions? Please be in touch with Tim Downs at [timothy.c.downs@gmail.com](mailto:timothy.c.downs@gmail.com).

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## Free Webinars for Your Church

The Insurance Board is pleased to offer the following online presentations:

### Fire Prevention and Protection for Churches

Wednesday, July 12, 2017

2:00 PM to 3:00 PM (Eastern Time)

### Keeping your Ministries Safe: 5 Things Churches Can Do to Prevent Abuse

Wednesday, September 13, 2017

2:00 PM to 3:00 PM (Eastern Time)

Register online: [anymeeting.com/insuranceboard](http://anymeeting.com/insuranceboard)

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## Leave it to the Stillspeaking Writers' Group...

to come up with a truly unique small-group study for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Four sessions, with topics such as:

- Guess What? You're a Priest
- Which Do You Prefer, an Angry God or a Cheap Gospel?
- "Total Depravity"
- Luther's Sins-and Ours

Click [here](#) for PREVIEW.

**500** includes a "Guide for Leading a Small Group Study." Click [here](#) to get it FREE.

